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29 Apr 03

To: MA to DepSecDef

From: Walt Slocumbe

Subject: New Iraqi Corps: Policy and Resource Issues to be Decided  
(I-No. 03/005706)

Here, as discussed in my meeting with DepSecDef last Thursday, is the initial cut at a listing of issues that either need to be decided here in Washington or delegated to CENTCOM/ORHA in order to meet the target of starting intake for the NIC by the end of May.

As your note recognized, this is very much a work in progress – in particular, CENTCOM and ORHA are still working on the concept; their plans will undoubtedly include recommendations on these points, and others.

Cc: PDUSD/P  
DUSD/NESA  
DJS

Iraq

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### New Iraqi Corps: Policy and Resources Issues To Be Decided

- CENTCOM working on plan to create a 3-division force as nucleus of new Iraqi Defense Force. Coordinated with ORHA. Will be briefed to LTG Abizaid shortly.
- Distinct from effort agreed at 28 Apr "town meeting" to recruit ex-RA and police for security duty in Baghdad.
- Target is to begin intake of recruits – both officer and enlisted – by 1 June, with initial units ready for at least limited operations by 1 July.
- Timeline is very tight. CENTCOM/ORHA will work on "physical" preparations, including:
  - Identifying and refurbishing facilities for intake, training, housing, organizing the units
  - Information program to attract recruits and explain the program to Iraqi public
  - Assembling vetting personnel and data
  - Securing equipment, uniforms, supplies
  - Establishing pay scales and making other arrangements for support
- **Significant policy/resource issues must be decided in Washington – or delegated to field – in next week or so, to enable process to move forward in field.**
- These include:
  - Mission – external defense? Reconstruction? Rehab of military facilities? Key question is degree of role in internal security – principle of non-political army for external defense in tension w/ urgent need for capability to maintain order, suppress various militias, put an Iraqi face on security – and relieve burden on Coalition military
  - Vetting standards (beyond various "wanted" lists and trying to identify needed skills)
    - What prior associations are absolute bars? Only service in SRG or further "inside" the old security system? RG service? Badr Corps? Fedayeen? Other militias?
    - Bar any Baath Party affiliation or only "full" membership? (Most RA officers likely had some BP link – and virtually all will claim they did not mean it)
    - Rank in old system – bar all flag-rank? All field-grade? (Trade off of experience/past abuses – and not clear RA experience is relevant here)
    - Preference for FIF? Former officers who left before the war? (Trade off of (theoretically) no past baggage/real commitment to change vs. acceptability to troops/Iraqi public and likely cost/speed issues)

- Subjective standards? E.g., commitment to change, adherence to extremist Islamist views? (Highly desirable, but how to identify quickly and accurately?)
- Process issues re vetting:
  - Standards can't outrun data – e.g., will we know who was a “full” – or indeed any sort of – member of the BP? Will we even have good identification of applicants?
  - Advantage of objective standards, like prior rank/service affiliation at cost of inflexibility/arbitrariness
  - Practical problems with reliance on interviews/self-reported background information;
  - Even where records are available, exploitation will be a slow process. (cf. Our own excellent and efficient security clearance process)
  - How to handle “denunciations?”
  - One possible approach –initial intake is only the initial screen; probation follows initial acceptance. During training, organization, operation, we will weed out problem cases and advance those with skill, dedication, commitment.
  - Possibility of “clean slate” approach – certain commonplace past “bad stuff” (e.g., being an informant for SSO) is not an absolute bar if disclosed, but concealment if later discovered means dismissal, even punishment
  - Who runs the vetting process? What authority to waive standards? Any internal appeal process?
  - Conform NIC standards to those for other functions – civil service, police, teaching, judiciary – and private sector opportunities?
  - What happens to those disqualified? Long term issue of what to do w/ those who served the Saddam state.
- Ethnic/Communal Issues
  - Fully open, “merit-based” process? (“Fairest,” but risk of perpetuating old system of no Kurds, Sunni officers, Shia enlisted)
  - Regional recruitment? (Risk of de facto division into Kurdish north, Arab center and south)
  - Seek fully integrated force, roughly proportional to population (Risk of Shia domination, “reverse discrimination,” internal problems in force/ with local population)

- Who manages the units?

- US SOF – on ANA model? (Special expertise/experience w/training 3d world militaries, promotes more flexible force, allows/implies de facto US SOF command; SOF a scarce resource)
- US regular army trainer units (on FIF Hungary model)? (Experienced, force modeled on USA patterns)
- US contractors – on Croatia model? (Experienced, costs high but different sources, greater availability/no competition w/ other US military priorities; speed of contracting/deployment an issue)
- Role for coalition/international contributors?

- Relation to IIA

- Initially NIC will be a US (or coalition) operation, under CENTCOM control both for organization and operations
- Need for consultation with emerging Iraqi leadership, once in place
- Eventual transition to IIA authority
- Issue of relationship to longer-term creation of new Iraq army – stand up civilian MOD, set national strategy, structure forces, determine level of resources for military – all require Iraqi buy-in for validity, but US has strong interests in outcomes.

- Resources

- Substantial costs – CENTCOM will have budget estimates – very preliminary initial projection is \$20-40M to start up for first six months. Likely to be low. (Typical MidEast militaries spend about \$5000-\$10000/yr/soldier – implies annual cost of \$200M for a 40K force)
- CENTCOM will absorb initial assessment/planning costs but not actual operation unless directed
- Potential sources:
  - Iraqi funds??
  - ORHA??
  - DOD O&M??
  - International (cash or kind)??
  - USAID??
  - FMF??
- Other resources also needed: Personnel slots, contracting/spending authority